

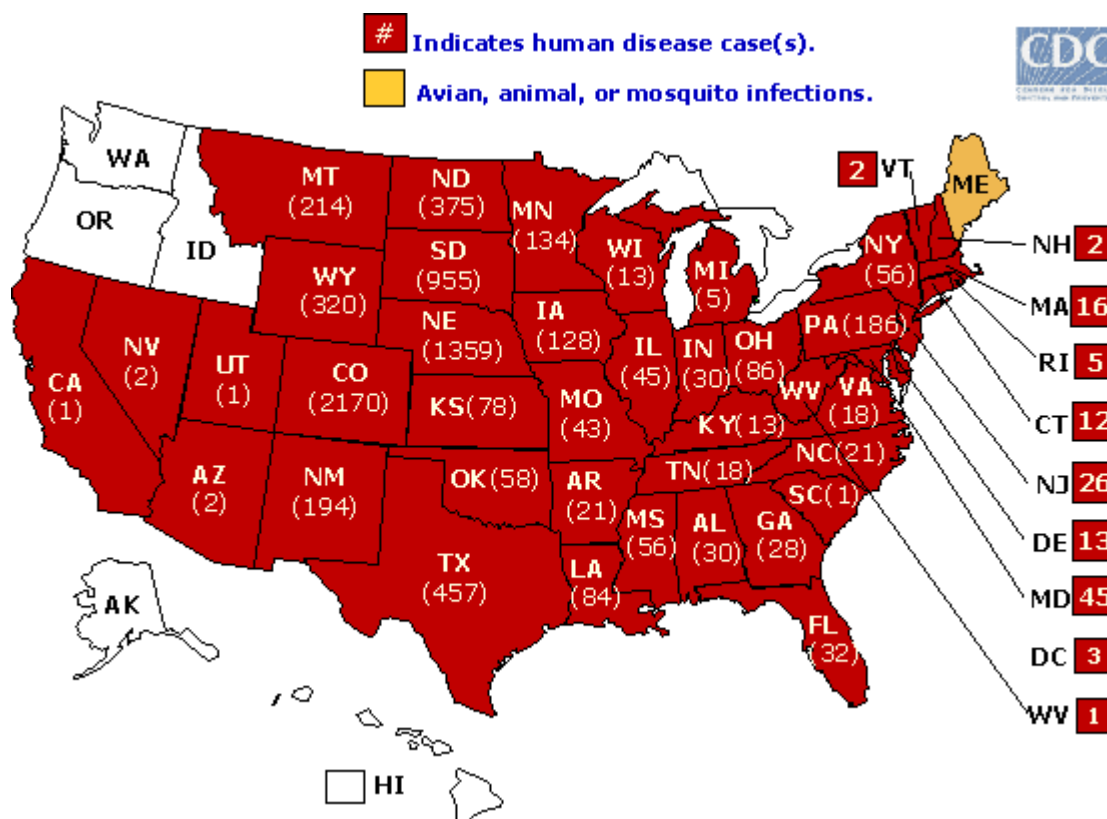


West Nile Virus Newsletter

This is an electronic publication designed to keep you informed on issues of interest related to West Nile virus (WNV) in Washington, and provide current information to assist you in developing a response plan to WNV in your jurisdiction.

Surveillance News

West Nile Virus in the United States as of October 21, 2003



National totals: 7,359 cases, 155 deaths as of October 21, 2003. Detailed information is available for 7,242 cases: 4,760 cases (66%) were reported as West Nile Fever (milder disease), 2,097 (29%) were reported as West Nile meningitis or encephalitis (severe disease) and 385 (5%) were clinically unspecified.

The above map shows the distribution of avian, animal, or mosquito infection during 2003 with number of human cases if any, by state. If WNV infection is reported to CDC Arbonet in any area of a state, that entire state is shaded accordingly.

The cases reported to CDC Arbonet for public distribution of avian, animal, or mosquito infection reported as of October 21, 2003 include 45 states. Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska, and Hawaii have not reported any WNV activity.

Human disease cases have been reported in 44 states: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

There has been no reported WNV activity in Washington in 2003.

Dead Bird Surveillance Winding Down

The onset of winter weather and dropping temperatures reduce mosquito activity and bring changes to the surveillance efforts. Bird surveillance will wind down on October 31. Limited testing will be done on a case-by-case basis. Check with Tom Gibbs, (360) 236-3060 or e-mail tom.gibbs@doh.wa.gov, if you might have a bird for late season testing. Corvids or raptors with symptoms of neurological illness would be likely specimens for testing. General testing of birds will resume next spring.

West Nile Virus Surveillance - Mexico

Mexico reported WNV surveillance activity as of October 15, 2003. The following figures are reproduced from the Resumen Epidemiologica accompanying the Maps of WNV Activity in Mexico. See the Web site at Virus del Oeste del Nilo.

Cumulative totals - Humans

A total of 505 individuals resident in 22 of the 32 states have been tested for evidence of WNV infection: 501 were seronegative and asymptomatic and four were classified as WNV-positive; three in the state of Chihuahua, and one (confirmed by RT-PCR) in the state of Sonora.

Cumulative totals - Equines

A total of 4,915 horses from 20 of the 32 states have been tested for evidence of WNV infection. Of these animals 1,803 were seropositive and 3,111 seronegative. All these animals were asymptomatic. In addition, one animal in the state of Nuevo Leon, which had the second highest incidence of seropositive animals, was symptomatic and died. This represents an increase of 443 horses tested since Monday, October 6, 2003, of which 93 were seronegative and 350 seropositive.

Cumulative totals - Birds

A total of 17,369 birds from eight of the 32 states have been tested for evidence of WNV infection. Of these birds, 102 were seropositive (and considered to be asymptomatic) and 17,266 were seronegative. In addition two dead birds were seropositive.

West Nile Virus Surveillance - Canada

As of Wednesday, October 15, 2003, there have been a total of 1,217 probable or confirmed cases of human infection in Canada and ten deaths. Saskatchewan remains the most severely affected province with 709 probable or confirmed cases and six deaths followed by Alberta with 252 confirmed cases and no deaths. The 12 probable and five confirmed cases in British Columbia are considered to be travel-related and not indigenous. For additional information on surveillance in Canada go to the [Health Canada](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca) Web site.

Local Health Focus – Island County Health Department

Submitted by: Kathleen Parvin, Island County Health Department

Island County has had some experience with mosquitoes. In 1990, the health department worked with a drainage district to identify and control a problem with *Ochlerotatus dorsalis* (aka *Aedes dorsalis*) on Whidbey Island. Again, in 1995 they assisted citizens on Camano Island to form our first mosquito control district to abate a severe problem with *Ochlerotatus dorsalis*.

In April of 2002, the Washington State Department of Health delivered mosquito trapping kits and rearing containers. Island County Health Department was fortunate to have a staff member with previous experience as a seasonal mosquito control technician to assist with training. However, with no staff dedicated solely to mosquito surveillance, our initial trapping season was very limited. One of the biggest challenges was obtaining dry ice locally for the traps. In 2002, despite infrequent trapping and limited rearing of larvae, they found two mosquito species not previously identified in Island County.

In 2003, with the assistance of a capacity building grant from the National Center for Environmental Health, CDC, Island County Health Department was able to hire an entomologist to continue the surveillance program through the 2003 mosquito season. With the assistance of the entomologist, they collected 97 additional mosquito samples and identified five species of mosquitoes not previously found in Island County.

The county health department also established a dead bird surveillance program with a digital mapping system to track and analyze the dead bird data reported to the county. They set-up a voice-mail line for citizens to call with dead bird reports outside of normal business hours. By the end of September, 171 reports of dead corvids had been logged. Forty-two were sent in for testing.

In July, with the Island County Public Works Solid Waste Division, the health department coordinated a used tire-recycling event with reduced fees at four county locations. Disposal was free for up to five tires to holders of Solid Waste Low Income Discount cards. The event was advertised on a local radio station and in four newspapers through display ads and community calendars. Posters were placed throughout the county. Response to the program was very positive with 886 tires collected. This was 39 percent of the total number of tires collected in all of 2002.

Educational activities have included extensive contact with the local media in distributing WNV information, habitat reduction, and personal protection messages. The county health department also prepared and delivered numerous presentations on WNV to a variety of audiences. Additionally, WNV brochures were made available at all public health facilities in the county.

Mosquito Focus – *Ochlerotatus increpitus*

Ochlerotatus increpitus can be found over the plains areas of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and also throughout most of California. Larvae can be found in pools along streams left when floodwaters subside, in depressions filled by irrigation water, hoof prints, ditches, after heavy rains, and melting snow. Depending on the altitude, the eggs usually hatch in March, April, or May.

Adults often are encountered in large numbers in wooded areas near their larval habitats in the late spring and early summer. They prefer open sun and are a day biting species.

Article Submission

We are interested in receiving articles for future publications of the WNV newsletter. Please submit articles to Tom Gibbs, tom.gibbs@doh.wa.gov.

Community Comments

Let us hear your comments on this newsletter, your needs, or things you would like to see, by sending them to Maryanne Guichard, (360) 236-3391 or maryanne.guichard@doh.wa.gov.

WNV Web Resources

Washington State Department of Health www.doh.wa.gov/wnv

Center for Disease Control <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/>

Washington State University Cooperative Extension <http://wnv.wsu.edu/>

Cornell University, Center for Environment <http://www.cfe.cornell.edu/erap/WNV>

Washington State Department of Agriculture

<http://agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/AnimalHealth/Diseases/WestNileVirus/default.htm>

DOH Contact List for West Nile Virus

General Public Toll-Free Hotline 1-866-78VIRUS

Publications: Brochures/Response Plan/Fact Sheets

Laura Harper, (360) 236-3380, or laura.harper@doh.wa.gov.

Surveillance: Mosquito

Jo Marie Brauner, (360) 236-3064, or jomarie.brauner@doh.wa.gov.

Surveillance: Dead bird surveillance and general WNV response

Tom Gibbs, (360) 236-3060, or tom.gibbs@doh.wa.gov.

Surveillance: Horses, case reporting, laboratory assistance

Dr. John Grendon, (360) 236-3362, or john.grendon@doh.wa.gov.

NPDES: Training, technical assistance

Ben Hamilton, (360) 236-3364, or benjamin.hamilton@doh.wa.gov.

WNV in Humans: Clinical information, case reporting, and laboratory testing

Call your local health jurisdiction or DOH Communicable Disease Epidemiology,
(206) 361-2914 or (877) 539-4344.

Assistance with news releases and media response

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To subscribe to this newsletter

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